

July Meeting Minutes

Our July 1983 meeting was held at the Waterloo Recreation Center and attended by 17 of our 35 members. We held a short business meeting with the following results :

We elected Stan Ernster as Vice President and Program Chairman.

Charles Hill reported that David Bodge of Manchester Iowa, and the creator of the ATACOMP compiler will attend our September 25th meeting.

John Corley passed out proposed bylaws to all Blackhawk ACE officers present.

Doug Weaver payed the Rec Center \$25 toward our past room rental.

Don Kramer accepted orders for computer grade cassette tapes.

The ANALOG 12 disk was made available to members with ANALOG subscriptions.

Stan Ernster brought a home made case which makes his ATARI system portable. He also showed us the ATARI 400 in which he installed a 48K memory board build from an original ATARI 8K board.

Tom Wanat showed us the games SHADOW WORLD, JUICE, JUMPMAN JUNIOR.

- MRS

September Meeting

Our September meeting will be held at 2:30PM Sunday 25 June, at the Waterloo Recreation Center, 225 Cedar Street, on the West side of downtown Waterloo along the Cedar River. Officers will hold a short meeting at 2:00. We will vote on adopting the Bylaws that John Corley has developed and sent out to members only as our August newsletter. Please attend and prepare ahead any suggestions you have.

The Analog 13 disk has not yet arrived and will not be available to club members with Analog subscriptions at our September meeting.

Hardware Volunteers for our September 1983 meeting are listed below :

NAME	ITEM
Alan Aukes	800, 810 Disk, TV
Stan Ernster	800, 410 Tape
Chuck Hill	810 Disk
Don Kramer	400, 410 Cassette
Mitch Hass	810, TV

We still need 4 more Disk drives, a printer, and another complete system. In looking over the hardware volunteer list for the past months I

always seem to see the same names. Make sure you do your part to make our organization a success. Write a newsletter article, type in a magazine program, or tote some hardware to a meeting every other month. What you don't do either increases the workload of another or doesn't get don at all.

Hardware volunteers are encouraged to arrive at 2:20PM to allow 10 minutes system setup time.

- MRS

Blackhawk ACE Header Bytes
Mike Seavey

Mitch Hass states he is almost complete with his machine language arcade game for ATARI computers. He is looking for a distributor now and making minor last second improvements. I saw an early version and even then you could tell METER-MAID (tentative name) is going to be a hit. If you run into Mitch and ask nice you too may get a prerelease look at what well may be the replacement for AE, CHOPLIFTER, DIGDUG, etc.

Ed Fletcher sent Blackhawk ACE a letter and a bunch of software he typed in, including CHEAPTALK, REMMAKER, REMOVER, RESISTOR, FUJI3D, LISTASSIT, LOADOBJ and others. To partially repay Ed for what must be some real tired fingers a disk of the latest Blackhawk ACE creations, type-ins, and downloads was mailed to him. Ed says he is forming a Colorado Springs ACE and that their 1st meeting will be September 11th. He also gives us the following BBS name and number: Electronic Cottage (303)-632-3391

Our application for official status was mailed to ATARI August 26th, but we have no word back yet from Sunnyvale.

Our informal August meeting was well attended and enjoyed much by the officers and chairpersons who often are overloaded at our regular formal meetings.

FOR SALE

Ed Wanat has an barely used Anchor Signalman modem for sale at \$70.00. Phone him at (319)-234-6813 before 7:00PM if you are interested.

A Fix for FIG-FORTH

If any of you have done much with the public domain FIG-FORTH available in the club library, you may have found out that the verb FORGET doesn't work. Fortunately, the Toronto Atari Programmer's Society newsletter, vol.1, no.4, contains a fix by Peter Coleman. Following is a

brief excerpt from the article.

To fix up your disk first boot it in then type:

12 2617 C! (or 1225 2616!)

07 LOAD and wait until computer returns with line below

STOF? then you hit (return)

and then type

MAKEBOOT

and without changing disks type Y to the request INSERT NEW DISK, TYPE Y

It will then inform you that it is writing sector : 1 to 4F

Then you can reboot in the knowledge that FORGET is working.

The article provides a complete explanation of what the problem is and what the fix does. If you're interested, the newsletter is available for checkout.

THE ATARI EDITOR-ASSEMBLER CARTRIDGE

—> TWO INTERESTING NEW USES <—

by Mike Seavey

Sometime back in COMPUTE magazine there was an article on how to make Execute files. The basic technique was to write a small usfull Basic program with no GOTO or GOSUB commands. This program would then be LISTed to disk. A program was provided to OPEN, READ, delete line numbers from, and WRITE a modified copy of the original. This modified copy is know as an Exec program because when it is ENTERed it runs as if typed line by line from the keyboard in immediate mode. I used this to get a disk directory, check disk RPM, or get a list of program variables with no adverse effect on any Basic program in memory at the time of need.

Well the point is the EDITOR-ASSEMBLER can do this as follows:

- 1) Write program to be EXEC
- 2) Test, debug, and LIST it to disk
- 3) Install your EDITOR-ASM cart
- 4) ENTER the pre-Exec program

5) PRINT the program to DISK !

"PRINT #D:FILENAME.EXC"

(This stores it on disk just like LIST, except with NO line numbers)

6) Install Basic and do whatever

7) To use the Exec just :

"ENTER "D:FILENAME.EXC"

8) The Exec will run, do its thing, and be gone.

9) The only effects on your resident Basic program will be entrys into the Variable Table and the word READY on the screen once for each lin number in the

Exec.

A related idea is to build an Exec file of EDITOR-ASSEMBLER replace commands as the basis for automatic translation programs. More on this next month.

AtariWriter

I'm far from an expert on word processing. In fact, the only word processor I've ever used is AtariWriter, so this review will not compare the pros and cons of AtariWriter versus the other word processors on the market. It will present the viewpoint of someone using this particular word processing program with no previous word processing experience.

AtariWriter is easy to get started with. Insert the cartridge, pop a disk with DOS on it into the drive, turn on the power, and away you go. You'll see the Atari logo for a few seconds, then the following menu appears on the screen:

```
Create File
Delete File
Edit File
Format Disk
Index of Disk Files
Load File
Print File
Save File.
```

To make a selection, push the key corresponding to the first letter of your choice. If you push "C" for "Create File" the screen will change. You'll see a blue display that's blank except for a cryptic row of numbers and inverse video letters at the top of the screen, and a black area at the bottom containing the legend "PRESS ESC TO RETURN TO MENU" and a row of small arrows pointing up. A quick glance at the manual will tell you that the top row of symbols is the print formatting block. Each combination of inverse video letter and normal numbers represents a default setting for one aspect of the way the document will be printed, such as marging width. The symbols are

fully explained in the manual, and any setting can be changed at any point in your document by inserting the proper symbols. The row of arrows at the bottom represents default tab settings. These can be changed by the SHIFT, CTRL, and TAB keys on the keyboard.

Start typing, and your words will appear on the 38 character wide display. At the end of a line, the display automatically wraps to the next line. You need only hit return at the end of a paragraph or to insert a blank line. Words are not split at the end of a line. If the final word of the line is too long, the program automatically moves the word down to the next line. Make a mistake, and you'll find that the DELETE/BACK S key works in just the same way as it does for normal screen editing. CTRL-DELETE/BACK S erases the character immediately above the cursor. DELETE/BACK S alone moves the cursor one space to the left and erases the character there. SHIFT-DELETE/BACK S erases an entire screen line.

After your deletions, if you try to insert a space for a new character you're in for a small surprise. The INSERT key doesn't do anything at all. AtariWriter works a bit differently. If you type a new letter in the middle of a word, the character above the cursor will move to the right to make room. The program doesn't overwrite any of the text, but continuously inserts spaces for the new characters as you hit the keys. This takes a little getting used to, but it's not especially inconvenient.

Press ESC and you're back to the menu. At this point you can choose "Save File" to save your document to disk or tape, "Print File" to print it out, or perhaps "Edit File" to return to the editing screen for further additions or deletions. If you choose "Save File" you will be asked for a device and a file name. If you choose "Print File" you will be given a further choice of four different Atari printers. If you use a non-Atari printer you must choose option 3, for the Atari 820. You're asked whether or not to print the whole document and how many copies you want. Answer the last question, and then, assuming your printer and interface are turned on, you'll soon have your finished copy.

As you can see, it really takes very little time for a rank beginner to begin doing basic word processing with AtariWriter. Once you've had a little experience with the program you can begin to use some of the more advanced features, such as block move and delete, file chaining, headers and footers, superscripts and subscripts, search and replace, etc. This is a fairly full featured word processor, and there's little left out that a home user would want.

One thing that might bother you is the

limitation of a short display line, a problem that's inherent in the hardware of all home computers. You can't see how your final printed page will look while you're writing. AtariWriter has an outstanding feature that helps to get around this. It's called "print preview". Select this option and the program will format your document, page by page, and display it on a screen that can be well over 80 columns wide. Of course, you won't be able to see all of the document at once. You see it through a 40 by 24 window, and scroll around it with the cursor movement keys. You can't edit in print preview mode either, but what do you want, egg in your beer? Believe me, this feature can save a lot of wasted printer paper.

The only real hangup I have with AtariWriter stems from the fact that I use a non-Atari printer. In order to use the various print modes and special features of my printer I have to insert the proper printer control codes in the document. This is cumbersome and inconvenient, and at times doesn't seem to work properly. Occasionally a connection will be missed somewhere and my printer won't be printing in the mode I want it to print in. Printer drivers on disk for various printer models are supposed to be available from APX, but I haven't tried to get one yet. If I do, I'll let you know how it works out.

I'm generally very pleased with AtariWriter. It's easy to use, it's fast, and it does everything I want to do with a word processor at this point in my life and a little more besides. The price is a bargain compared to some other word processors on the market, and I'd recommend it to anyone.

- JMC

"Blue Max"
by Bob Polin
for Synapse Software

Have you ever watched "Lafayette Escadrille" on the late show and dreamed of cruising through a clear summer sky above the French landscape, hearing nothing but the drone of your engine, your white scarf flowing in the wind, while you search the clouds for your arch enemy, the infamous Red Baron? Did you ever want to be a hero, an ace, the victor in countless one-on-one aerial duels? Are you looking for a game that will give you that feeling? Well, keep looking, because Blue Max isn't it.

That doesn't mean Blue Max isn't a good game. I've worn out a joystick on it. It's just that it's a bombing and strafing simulation, not an aerial combat simulation, and it does a good job of being what it is.

The premise of the game is that you are Max Chatsworth, famed British ace of World War I, named by his comrades "Blue Max" after the medal offered to any German aviator who could shoot him down. The object of the game is to bomb and strafe as many targets as possible, collecting points along the way, and eventually win the game by destroying three key targets in the enemy city (if you live that long). The graphics are excellent. You look down on a diagonally scrolling 3-D playfield and on a small biplane that you control. The shadow of the plane on the ground below gives a valuable visual clue to your altitude, and at the bottom of the screen you'll find a continuous display of fuel remaining, damage received, speed, and altitude. With the joystick you can make your plane go up, down, left, and right, drop bombs, and fire your guns. As the ground unrolls beneath your plane various bridges, buildings, boats, tanks, and other targets are revealed. Strafing requires that you maintain a relatively low altitude. To drop a bomb requires that you depress the joystick trigger and drop the plane slightly. Trying to bomb from strafing altitude generally results in a crash. You are subject to damage from antiaircraft fire and attack by enemy planes. You can shoot down the enemy planes, but since the directions of movement of your plane and the enemy are limited, you don't get a true dogfight sensation.

The scrolling 3-D playfield is reminiscent of Zaxxon. In fact, the ads proclaim that Blue Max out-Zaxxons Zaxxon. That's a matter of individual taste. I prefer Blue Max, though I don't care for the way the game can decide when it's over. I'll be sitting peacefully on the runway refueling when an enemy plane flies over and bombs me into oblivion. In fact, I've been bombed into oblivion when there wasn't an enemy plane in sight (a refueling accident?). It doesn't happen often, but when it does it leaves me screaming and cursing. I prefer a game where failure results only from my own bad decisions and poor reflexes.

There are three levels of play: novice, intermediate, and advanced. There's not a great deal of difference. Nothing moves faster in the higher levels, there's just more flak and more enemy planes. You also have choices of normal or reverse control and gravity or no gravity. If you choose "normal" control then pulling back on the joystick causes the plane to descend. If you choose "reverse" control then pulling back on the joystick causes the plane to rise. It really doesn't matter of course, but that seems backwards to me. If you choose the "gravity" option then the plane will constantly drift downward whenever you're not pulling back (or pushing forward) on

the joystick. With the "no gravity" option the plane maintains a constant altitude when the joystick is centered.

Your score is displayed continuously, and at the end of the game you're given a rank as well. So far, I've ended up anywhere from "Kamikaze Trainee, class 1" to "Squadron Leader, class 3". The rankings aren't mentioned at all in the documentation, so you're left to guess whether Squadron Leader is better than Flying Tiger, or better than Runway Sweeper for that matter. I can't tell if the difficulty level affects your ranking or not.

Overall, I like this game. I've put more time in on it than any new game I've bought in quite some time. It's easy enough to hold your interest while you develop some skill, and interesting enough to keep you coming back for more.

- JMC

An Experimental Light Pen for 89 cents by Gary Sorenson

(reprinted from the SCAT Newsletter, May 83)

You see a lot about light pens lately in the major computer publications. If you're not ready to buy one of the "super" ones yet, or just want to experiment with the pen at low cost, here is one way to do it: the 89 cent light pen. You'll need the following:

1 - Infrared Phototransistor TIL414 (Radio Shack part number 276-145) - 89 cents.

1 - 4 foot length of wire with 2 conductors (line cord will do, but a shielded cable with one center conductor will do better).

1 - Atari joystick

We're going to be "hooking-up" to the inside of the Atari joystick so that we won't need a cable and connector to go into the computer joystick port. We're concerned with just two of the wires inside the Atari cable which go to pins 6 and 8 on the joystick port - the "ground" and the "trigger" respectively. The pen will not have an on-off switch, but for experimenting this should not present a problem. Here's how:

1. Open the joystick up and locate the black and orange wires that connect to the printed circuit board. The black is "ground" and goes to pin 8 of the port. The orange is "trigger" and goes to pin 6.

2. Attach one end of your wires (or cables) to these two connections by soldering or by just press fitting the wires under the connectors on the printed circuit board. If you use shielding

(shielded cable), the shield braid will be attached to the black and the center conductor to the orange. Thread the wires out through the hole in the joystick base where the original cable goes out.

3. Making sure that you have the other end of the same wire, connect the phototransistor to the black lead wire (look at the bottom of the phototransistor and you'll see a small green dot painted near one of the two leads - this lead should be attached to the black).

4. The remaining lead coming from the bottom of the phototransistor should be attached to the remaining wire, so that it is really attached to the orange.

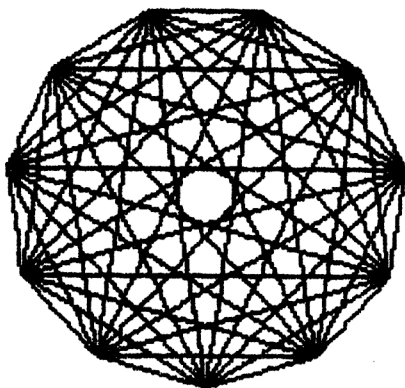
What you have done is connected the "negative" lead of the phototransistor to the ground lead (black) of the joystick. (The negative lead of the phototransistor is the one nearest the green dot). The other lead - the "positive" one - is now connected to the orange wire of the joystick.

To use, plug the stick into any port - but remember to always use the same port each time, if you write a program. Try this for a beginning program:

```
5 POKE 752,1:PRINT "ESC-CTRL-CLR"
10 POKE 703,4:PRINT PEEK(564),PEEK(565):GOTO 10
```

Line 5 inhibits the cursor and clears the screen. Line 10 puts a graphics window at the bottom of the Gr. 0 screen and prints the light pen vertical value (location 565). Remember that these light pen values do not relate to columns and rows. This pen is very sensitive by comparison to most and can "read" almost all the screen without having too much brightness. Remember too that the phototransistor can be used to act as a counter when used with a light source or in a burglar alarm system. Naturally it can be used to make selections from a screen menu from within a program.

See "Outpost:Atari" in the March 83 issue of Creative Computing magazine for more information on light pen operation.



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PUBLICATION POLICY

The Blackhawk Atari Computer Enthusiasts Newsletter will be published once each month except August and December. It is distributed to members and to other Atari users groups who provide copies of their newsletter.

Members may place three line adds (150 characters) of a noncommercial nature free of charge. Commercial advertisements will be accepted at the rate of \$10.00 per issue for half column adds or three issues for \$25.00, and \$20.00 per issue for full column or half page adds or three issues for \$50.00. Send camera ready copy and check to Blackhawk ACE, 204 Cedar Crest Dr., Cedar Falls, Ia. 50613.

Blackhawk Atari Computer Enthusiasts officers

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Annual dues are \$10.00. Membership includes a subscription to the newsletter and use of the club library.

Meetings are held the fourth Sunday of each month, except August and December, at 2:30 P.M. at the Waterloo Recreation Center.

This group is not in any way affiliated with the Atari Company.